EDITORIAL.

MANY BOTANISTS in the United States have felt that the time has come when it would be profitable to make a compact and complete presentation of the North American flora, so far as it is known. It is thought that such a work will make information so accessible that study will be stimulated and knowledge developed much more rapidly. Such a work does not represent the end of investigation so much as a foundation for its more vigorous prosecution. It is with this purpose that certain botanists now announce that arrangements have been perfected for the publication of a "Systematic Botany of North America." The work is to be under the editorial control of Messrs. Atkinson, Britton, Coulter, Coville, Greene, Halsted, Hollick and Underwood; and they have already announced the co-operation of at least thirty more of our best known botanists. It is the intention to invite the largest possible co-operation, in order that the work may be so subdivided as to make its completion possible within a reasonable time. The work is to appear in seventeen volumes, with about five parts to each volume and 100 pages to each part. There will be no illustrations, but full references will be made to published figures. Special features will be the examination of type specimens, the citation of type localities, geographical distribution, and a discussion of the economic, palæontologic and horticultural features of each order. The general sequence of orders adopted is that of Engler and Prantl in "Die natürlichen Pflanzenfamilien," and just as in that work, parts of all volumes may be printed simultaneously. A uniform style of presentation and a consistent nomenclature will be adopted, but each monographer will be responsible for his own matter. It is hoped that five or six parts will appear annually, beginning with 1895.

We cannot but feel that this large undertaking marks an epoch in the history of systematic botany in North America. To attempt to present the complete flora of a great continent in so short a time means great activity and extensive organization, and the large response already obtained testifies to a fine fraternal feeling among American botanists. In the very nature of things such a work will be uneven, but the unevenness will be no more noticeable than that of our great cyclopædias. There can be no doubt that in the course of preparation it will also develop many new investigators of our varied flora. We bespeak for the work the widest co-operation, that it may be made a fit monument to the zeal and industry of American botany and a notable datum-line from which subsequent advances can be more rapidly made.